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## Letter dated 9 January 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that the Government of Lebanon hereby requests the Security Council to extend the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), which expires on 31 January 2002, for a further interim period of six months in accordance with the provisions of Security Council resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978). It does so in view of the fact that the continued deployment of the Force remains necessary if it is to complete the task entrusted to it, given that, as per your pertinent observations in various reports, an important part of its mandate has not yet been fulfilled, particularly "the restoration of international peace and security", and especially in the light of the serious violations and provocations in which Israel engages on a daily basis on land, at sea and in the air and which constitute ongoing aggression against Lebanese sovereignty and are in breach of Security Council resolution 425 (1978).

In this context, Lebanon stresses the need and importance of the presence of UNIFIL without any change to its strength and its mandate as set out in resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978), especially in the light of the conditions prevailing in the area, to which you previously alluded and which have become, as you are aware, dangerous and fraught with grave implications.

Given the foregoing, it is my Government's belief that any eventual reconfiguration of the Force would undermine the sense of security and safety and would hinder the full, effective and efficient implementation of its mandate.

Moreover, the Government of Lebanon wishes to emphasize that the deployment of UNIFIL exemplifies the commitment of the international community to the restoration of the full sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon, as stipulated in resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978).

Lebanon hereby calls for the release of those who have for years been detained in Israeli prisons illegally and in defiance of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols. It urgently demands the removal of the thousands of mines, left in Lebanese territory by the Israeli occupation, which continue to bring death and injury to civilians and to restrict their freedom of activity and movement.

I take this opportunity to reaffirm Lebanon's commitment to the peace process in the Middle East with a view to the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the region based on compliance with Security Council resolutions

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242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the principle of land for peace, in accordance with the Madrid terms of reference.

The Lebanese Government also takes this opportunity to pay tribute to UNIFIL and to its commanders and soldiers, as well as to the troop-contributing countries, for their tireless efforts and the sacrifices they have made to implement the mandate of the Force.

Furthermore, the Government of Lebanon wishes to convey to you its appreciation for your tireless efforts, which contribute to the valuable presence of UNIFIL in southern Lebanon.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Selim **Tadmoury**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative